

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Demolition and Abandonment of Atlas and Titan Facilities

Vandenberg Air Force Base, California

Pursuant to provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), 42 U.S. Code 4321 *et seq.*, implementing Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations, 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1500-1508, and 32 CFR Part 989, *Environmental Impact Analysis Process* (EIAP), the U.S. Air Force (Air Force) conducted an assessment of the potential environmental consequences associated with demolition and abandonment activities of various buildings and structures associated with the Atlas and Titan Heritage launch programs on Vandenberg Air Force Base (AFB), California.

Vandenberg AFB is headquarters to the 30th Space Wing, the Air Force Space Command unit that operates Vandenberg AFB and the Western Range. Vandenberg AFB operates as a missile test base and aerospace center, supporting west coast space launch activities for the Air Force, Department of Defense, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and commercial contractors.

Vandenberg AFB is located on the south-central coast of California, approximately halfway between San Diego and San Francisco. The 99,100-acre base extends along approximately 35 miles of the Santa Barbara County coastline.

As the Atlas and Titan Heritage launch programs come to their conclusions, facilities associated with these programs on Vandenberg AFB will be returned to the 30th Civil Engineer Squadron Squadron (30 CES) over a period of several years for subsequent Air Force management. The 30 CES and the 30th Plans Office (30 SW/XP) have evaluated the need for retaining the various buildings and structures associated with these programs and have proposed to demolish or abandon a number of them for the following reasons:

- The buildings and structures do not provide infrastructure support or meet existing mission requirements where costs are covered by available base or program resources.
- The buildings and structures do not provide infrastructure support or meet identified future mission requirements where costs are covered by available base or program resources.
- The buildings and structures could provide infrastructure support or meet future, but currently unidentified missions; however, neither base nor program funds are available to maintain the facilities.
- The condition of the building or structure does not justify retention.

The Programmatic Environmental Assessment (PEA) (incorporated as an attachment to this finding) considered all potential impacts of the proposed action and alternatives, both as a solitary action and potentially in conjunction with other similar

projects. The PEA examined a representative set of buildings proposed for demolition or abandonment that would provide the Commander, 30th Space Wing and other reviewers of this document with an overview of the process to be followed and an analysis of potential environmental impacts. The PEA provides general environmental criteria and guidelines for proposed demolition and abandonment activities that can be used to avoid adverse environmental impacts. It analyzes activities that have the potential to affect both the natural and human environment. Further environmental impact analysis shall occur once preliminary engineering plans are available.

PROPOSED ACTION

The Proposed Action is to demolish or abandon Atlas and Titan Heritage launch program buildings no longer required to sustain either current or foreseeable Vandenberg AFB missions, and which are returned to the 30th Civil Engineer Squadron Real Estate Office. Buildings proposed for demolition or abandonment are located throughout Vandenberg AFB. Twenty-eight (28) buildings are located on North Vandenberg AFB and 35 buildings are located on South Vandenberg AFB.

The Proposed Action would entail the total above grade demolition, complete abandonment, or partial demolition and partial abandonment of specific structures at each of the buildings. The degree to which a building is demolished to above grade and then abandoned depends on the type of building and would be determined at the time of implementation of the Proposed Action. Actions that would be performed under the Proposed Action include:

- Pre-demolition biological, cultural, and environmental surveys, which would result in approval to proceed, conditional approval to proceed, or delay of approval to proceed.
- Abatement and management of asbestos, lead-based paints, or other human or environmental hazards.
- Deconstruction to facilitate the removal and management of selected items and to prepare the building for above grade structural demolition.
- Demolition of the building and above grade structural components.
- Demolition debris management, including segregation for subsequent reuse, recycling, or disposal of all building materials.
- Site restoration to grade level, to include infilling with inert demolition debris and appropriate fill material from existing Vandenberg AFB borrow pits, as required.
- Hydro-seeding with a seed mixture pre-approved by the 30th Civil Engineer Squadron Environmental Flight (30 CES/CEV), to minimize the potential for erosion and runoff.

Above grade concrete portions of buildings would be removed and the concrete would be segregated and crushed for use as engineered fill, road base, or aggregate for new concrete. Break-up of concrete could be accomplished by a variety of methods

including cutting saws, stingers, jack hammers, wrecking balls, sledge hammers, and explosives.

Steel portions of buildings would be cut into manageable pieces and sent to smelters for recycling. Methods proposed for bringing metal structures down to ground level include explosives, felling, systematic disassembly, and cutting.

Abandonment of buildings under the Proposed Action would entail ensuring the buildings are safe and secured against accidental intrusion by humans and wildlife to prevent endangering human health and safety and entrapment of wildlife.

Demolition and abandonment of the proposed buildings would occur over approximately a 10-year period starting in 2005 and concluding in 2015.

Implementation of the No-Action Alternative would result in the abandonment of buildings in-place once current facility occupants accomplished facility closure and turn-in procedures per 30th Space Wing Instruction 32-901, *Facility Closure Turn-In Procedures*. Over time the buildings would continue to deteriorate and have the potential to attract vectors or result in conditions that could pose a risk to human health and the environment as a result of structural failure and the release of hazardous materials.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The analyses of the affected environment and environmental consequences of implementing the Proposed Action presented in the PEA concluded that with implementation of the project and monitoring measures described, no significant effects should result to Cultural Resources (Section 4.3), Hazardous Materials and Hazardous Waste Management (Section 4.4), Human Health and Safety (Section 4.5), Solid Waste Management (Section 4.7), Transportation (Section 4.8), and Water Resources (Section 4.9). All measures described in the PEA (Section 2.4) will be implemented to ensure adverse impacts are precluded. No cumulative adverse impacts will result from activities associated with the demolition and abandonment of Atlas and Titan Heritage launch program buildings, when considered in conjunction with recent past and future projects within the project area (Section 4.10).

Four areas of environmental consequences evaluated in the PEA were determined to have the potential to result in less than significant impacts to the environment.

Air Quality

Mobile source emissions would temporarily increase during demolition and abandonment activities, but would not exceed regulatory standards. No significant impacts are anticipated (see PEA Sections 3.1 and 4.1). Haul truck emissions from the Proposed Action would occur over a period of ten years, and be generated across Santa Barbara County. However, with the self-imposed emission limits as described in Section 4.1 of the PEA, the Proposed Action would not be considered significant.

All measures described in the PEA (Section 2.4.1) will be implemented to further decrease emissions during project activities.

Biological Resources

The federally endangered Gaviota tarplant (*Deinandra increscens* ssp. *villosa*) was documented on the eastern side of the Santa Ynez Water Plant (Buildings 1200 through 1209). Because buildings proposed for demolition at this facility are not located near the area where the plants occur, this special status plant species will not be affected.

A number of buildings and structures support various species of passerine birds, raptors and bats. To prevent the potential loss of nests, eggs or nestlings protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, demolition of these buildings and structures would be scheduled outside of the breeding season for the species identified. To prevent entrapment of any of these species pre-construction surveys will be completed and appropriate exclusion measures will be implemented prior to the start of project activities as described in the PEA (Section 2.4.2). No significant impacts are anticipated (see PEA Sections 3.2 and 4.2).

Pre-construction surveys and monitoring as described in Section 2.4.2 would minimize any potential adverse impacts to wildlife species resulting from disturbances associated with demolition activities. No significant impacts are anticipated (see PEA Sections 3.2 and 4.2).

Cultural Resources

Two of the buildings to be demolished and a portion of the security fence at SLC-4 are within an archaeological site eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Although the sites significant qualities will not be affected by demolition activities, a qualified archaeologist and Native American will monitor demolition activities.

One cultural site, deemed a significant contributing element to the San Antonio Terrace Archaeological District, and eligible for the NRHP, extends into the vicinity of Building 1836 at the ABRES B launch complex. However, the site is more than 200 meters away and its significant qualities will not be affected by demolition activities at Building 1836. Archaeologists and a Native American familiar with the site will install fencing along the eastern edge of Tod Road to ensure vehicles and pedestrians stay on the road for the duration of the demolition work.

Three of the Radio Frequency Huts proposed for demolition (Buildings 1958, 1982, and 1992) are in or near archaeological sites. To ensure no resources are affected, only rubber-tired vehicles and equipment will be used during demolition activities at these three buildings. Motorized vehicles will be restricted to existing driveways, roads, and the graveled surface surrounding the buildings. An archaeologist and a Native American monitor will be present during demolition activities at the three buildings to ensure no archaeological deposits are inadvertently affected.

No significant impacts are anticipated on cultural resources (see PEA Sections 3.3 and 4.3). Implementation of the measures described above and in the PEA (Section 2.4.3) should prevent potential for minor impacts from occurring.

Land Use and Aesthetics

The Air Force will coordinate the Proposed Action with the California Coastal Commission to comply with the Coastal Zone Management Act.

Water Quality

Because the project would disturb an area greater than one acre, a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit would be required to protect water resources. The NPDES Permit requires the development and implementation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan that includes preventative maintenance measures for equipment, spill prevention and response measures, sediment and soil erosion control measures, and identifies measures for management of runoff.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Based upon our review of the facts and analyses contained in the attached PEA, conducted in accordance with the provisions of NEPA, the CEQ Regulations, AFI 32-7061, as amended by the interim change dated March 12, 2003, which adopted 32 CFR Part 989, we conclude that the Proposed Action should not have a significant environmental impact, either by itself or cumulatively with other ongoing projects at Vandenberg AFB. Accordingly, an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
CONCURRENCE PAGE**

Programmatic Environmental Assessment for the Demolition and Abandonment of
Atlas and Titan Facilities
Vandenberg Air Force Base, California

I concur with the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)

Environmental, Safety, and Occupational Health Council Approval:



JACK WEINSTEIN, Colonel, USAF
Commander, 30th Space Wing
Chairman, Environmental, Safety, and Occupational Health Council
Vandenberg AFB, CA

28 Feb 06
Date

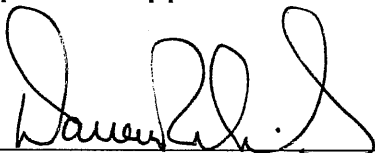
Judge Advocate Approval:



GARY M. KRAMER, LT COL, USAF - for -
DOUGLAS G. MURDOCK, Lt Col, USAF
Staff Judge Advocate
Vandenberg AFB, CA

1 Feb 06
Date

Squadron Approval:



DARREN R. DANIELS, Lt Col, USAF
Commander, 30th Civil Engineer Squadron
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10 Jan 06
Date